

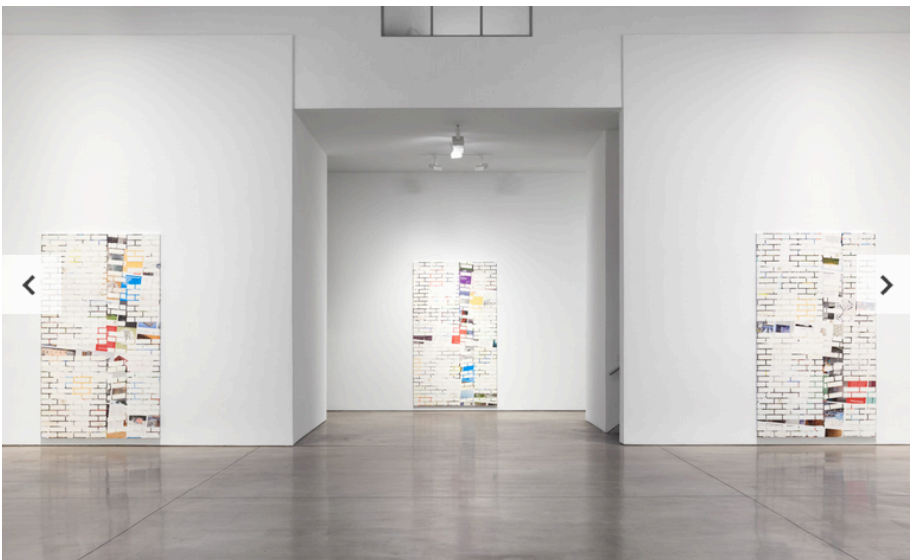
THOMAS DANE GALLERY

Stephanie Murg, Kelley Walker Tears Down Convention Brick by Brick, *Wallpaper*, 9th March 2015



Installation view of Kelley Walker at New York's Paula Cooper Gallery.
Photography: Steven Probert, courtesy of artist and Paula Cooper Gallery

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A dozen paintings of silkscreened bricks atop canvases wrapped in pages of a year's worth of design magazine *Domus* hang at the New York art gallery.
Photography: Steven Probert, courtesy of artist and Paula Cooper Gallery

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'Untitled' (2013) *Photography: Steven Probert, courtesy of artist and Paula Cooper Gallery*

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Made in the shape of Walker's studio windows, the paintings are meant to reflect the depth of actual architectural space as well as this confused, digitally displaced logic. *Photography: Steven Probert, courtesy of artist and Paula Cooper Gallery*

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The magazine pages and the bricks are combined using the four-color printing process known as CMYK. Photography: Steven Probert, courtesy of artist and Paula Cooper Gallery

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'It is difficult to generate originality in such a synthetic world,' noted David Chipperfield in the July/August 2012 issue of *Domus*. The architect's observation is present in more ways than one in an exhibition of new work by artist Kelley Walker. The dozen paintings on show at Paula Cooper Gallery erect walls of silkscreened bricks atop canvases wrapped in pages of a year's worth of the Gio Ponti-founded design magazine, building shifting, blurring layers of the digital and the analog, the structural and the decorative, the humble and the slick.

'These are the shape of my studio windows,' says Walker, who lives and work in New York City. 'So on one level you're seeing the depth of actual architectural space and yet you're also seeing this confused, digitally displaced logic—the way the bricks sputter and spit, they feel like static and at the same time signs or letters.'

The identically sized works each interrupt an orderly grid of bruised white bricks with a horizontal gap that intersects a vertical band in which the bricks become irregular, tilting in Morse code-like bursts at angles aligned precisely with the off-kilter underlayer of collaged magazine pages. The result is a colorful cruciform structure that animates each 2.5-meter tall canvas. 'So the wooden stretcher bar itself is incorporated,' notes Walker, 'mocked by the cross but also referenced in new form with the paper.'

Reading between the lines, one can scrutinize fragments of *Domus*, one 2012 issue per painting. From beneath the hand-cut bricks emerge sleek chairs and light fixtures, ads for the Salone del Mobile, phrases like 'artificial topography' and 'Silicon Roundabout,' an image of the deserted Baghdad Zoo, a quote bemoaning the practical applications of architectural 'theory' in Italy.

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'This is *Domus* for one year, so it's like seeing a year of color,' says Walker. 'I don't know what it's going to look like in twenty years.' The four-color printing process known as CMYK unites the magazine pages and the bricks, which Walker has been working with since 2005. He purchases the bricks online, a hundred at a time, and upon arrival, places them one by one atop the scarred glass bed of his studio scanner. The individual images are stacked and then silk-screened.

'Magazines are also created using CMYK, but the bricks are hand-printed, so they're always wildly free-form,' he says. 'There's two of us pulling [ink through the screen], and we pull on different days, at different times, different moments, different pressure, so the body is present in these, just as it is in architecture.'

Occupying the space of painting while making use of various means of reproduction, these canvases, with their wrapped edges, gridded surfaces, and picture-window scale, meet Chipperfield's challenge. They are a genre onto themselves, incorporating personal choices and architectural dimensions to initiate a shift in perception. 'They point to this frustrating period that we're in,' says Walker, 'trapped somewhere between analog and digital.'

<http://www.wallpaper.com/art/kelley-walker-tears-down-convention-brick-by-brick/8558#113853>